

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-02 TRSE-00 EB-07 COME-00 AGRE-00 /067 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/EE: KNBROWN

APPROVED BY EUR: JAARMITAGE

D: LPASCOE

-----119417 091922Z /47

R 090051Z JUL 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 159582

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BU

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR POPOV CALLS ON DEPUTY SECRETARY

1. POPOV CALLED ON DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER JULY 7 TO REVIEW BILATERAL RELATIONS BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR HOME LEAVE AND CONSULTATIONS. DEPUTY SECRETARY THANKED POPOV FOR HIS OWN AND FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV'S MESSAGES TO THE SECRETARY FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY. HE CONTINUED THAT POPOV HAS MADE PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS, AND EXPRBSED HOPE THAT VISIBLE PROGRESS IN THE FAMILY REUNIFICATION AREA CAN BE USED AS A SPRINGBOARD FOR FURTHER PROGRESS IN OUR OVERALL RELATIONSHIP. DEPUTY SECRETARY ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR UPCOMING TALKS WITH FOREIGN BONDHOLDERS.

2. THE DEPUTY SECRETARY CONFIRMED THE US DESIRE TO PURSUE A DETENTE RELATIONSHIP. HE REFERRED TO THE VISIT TO THE US OF SOVIET DEPUTY PREMIER KIRILLIN TO EXTEND A BILATERAL

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SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES AGREEMENT AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE PROGRESS THAT CAN BE MADE DESPITE THE EPHEMERAL TENSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. DEPUTY SECRETARY NOTED THAT REAL PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE ON SALT DURING THE LAST MEETING BBTWEENTHE SECRETARY AND GROMYKO, AND EXPLAINED THAT THE US SEEKS TO CONDUCT THE BELGRADE CSCE FOLLOW-UP

MEETING IN A BUSINESS-LIKE ATMOSPHERE WITH THE AIM OF IMPROVING THE HUMAN CONDITION OF THE PEOPLES OF THE US AND BULGARIA. DEPUTY SECRETARY TOLD POPOV THAT IT IS OUR DESIRE TO CONDUCT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS NOT JUST ON SPECIFIC BILATERAL ISSUES BUT ON BROADER GLOBAL PROBLEMS OF INTEREST TO BOTH PARTIES.

3. POPOV PICKED UP LAST POINT TO INQUIRE AS TO PROSPECTS FOR MORE "POLITICAL CONTACTS" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE NOTED THAT BULGARIA WELCOMED US HIGH-LEVEL VISITS, SUCH AS FORMER AGRICULTURE SECRETARY BUTZ, AND WONDERED WHEN FONMIN MLADENOV MIGHT SEE THE SECRETARY, SPECIFICALLY MENTIONING THE UPCOMING UNGA. DEPUTY SECRETARY NOTED THAT HE WAS ENCOURAGING INCREASED POLITICAL CONTACTS BETWEEN THE US AND BULGARIA. HE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT HIGH-LEVEL VISITS ARE USEFUL AND SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED, SUBJECT TO THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE. HE WAS SURE THE SECRETARY WOULD LIKE TO SEE MLADENOV IF HIS SCHEDULE PERMITS; IF NOT, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY WOULD BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH HIM.

4. POPOV TURNED TO MFN, NOTING THAT MOST IMPORTANT BULGARIAN EXPORT TO US, TOBACCO, WAS HEAVILY TAXED. POPOV WONDERED WHETHER THE NEW ADMINISTRATION HAD EXAMINED THE MFN QUESTION. DEPUTY SECRETARY RESPONDED THAT CHANGE ON THE MFN FRONT WILL DEPEND ON THE DEVELOPMENT

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OF RELATIONS. THE ADMINISTRATION MUST BE ABLE TO CONVINCE CONGRESS THAT VISIBLE CHANGE IN OUR RELATIONSHIP HAD OCCURED, AND INVITED POPOV TO WORK TOGETHER TOWARDS ACHIEVING THAT END. ARMITAGE NOTED THAT, IF POPOV WAS REFERRING TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY TOWARDS EXISTING LEGISLATION, THE KEY ISSUE IN THAT LEGISLATION IS SOVIET PERFORMANCE. THUS, DEVELOPMENTS IN US-USSR RELATIONS WILL BE KEY DETERMINANT OF MFN QUESTION. DEPUTY SECRETARY NOTED THAT NEVERTHELESS WE HOPED FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN US-BULGARIAN RELATIONS. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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